

is tired of seeing coal mining jobs disappear from Pineville, from his native Bell County, and from the region. I agree with him, 100 percent.

From Jimmy's first appearance on "America's Got Talent" earlier this summer, he became a phenomenon. People could identify with the words he sang, and they could identify with his courteous disposition and steadfast character as the trademarks of the people of southeastern Kentucky. Fans across the country have happily supported, voted for, and sung along with Jimmy Rose.

I commend Jimmy Rose for putting a face on a problem that is all too often overlooked by some in Washington—the plight of the coal miner and the many hard-working Kentuckians whose jobs are related to the coal industry. In these difficult economic times, we should be doing everything we can to protect these jobs and protect a way of life for thousands of families.

I think Jimmy's message is an important one. And I want to congratulate Jimmy Rose for all his success to date. I am certain that we will be hearing much more from him in the years to come.

TRIBUTE TO REAR ADMIRAL MARK D. GUADAGNINI

Mr. MCCAIN. Mr. President, today I honor a superb leader, aviator, and American. After more than 33 years of service to a grateful nation, RADM Mark D. Guadagnini is retiring from the United States Navy and his position as the Director of U.S. Fleet Forces Command's Maritime Headquarters. On this occasion, I believe it is fitting to recognize Rear Admiral Guadagnini's years of distinguished service and dedication to fostering the relationship between the military and this Chamber.

Rear Admiral Guadagnini is a 1980 distinguished graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy. Over the course of his career, he participated in six combat Operations, including Desert Storm, Provide Comfort, Deliberate Force, Southern Watch, Enduring Freedom, and Iraqi Freedom, accumulating almost 5000 hours of flight time and accomplishing nearly 100 combat missions. He has led at the highest levels of operational aviation command at Strike Fighter Attack Squadron 15, Carrier Air Wing 17, and Carrier Strike Group NINE.

In addition to his impressive accomplishments at sea, he was also one of our most well-rounded officers, serving as a test pilot, flag aide, fleet staff officer, manpower distribution officer, a Capitol Hill liaison, and, not coincidentally, as one of my first and best legislative fellows 20 years ago. While in the flag ranks, Rear Admiral Guadagnini leveraged his expertise serving as the chief of Naval Air Training; head of Human Resources for the Naval Aviation Enterprise; Deputy Commander for Fleet Management at U.S. Fleet

Forces Command, and lastly, as the director of Maritime Headquarters at U.S. Fleet Forces Command.

I could not be prouder of the accomplishments that "Guad" has earned while wearing the uniform of the world's greatest fighting force. His impact, particularly in the aviation community, will continue well into the future and our navy and nation will feel his absence. I wish him and his whole family "fair winds and following seas."

TRIBUTE TO DR. MILTON RUSH

Ms. LANDRIEU. Mr. President, today I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the distinguished teacher and agricultural scientist, Dr. Milton C. Rush. Dr. Rush devoted his career to his students, his research, and his tireless efforts to protect and enhance one of our most important sources of nutrition.

Dr. Rush began his career in rice pathologies in 1970 as a professor at Louisiana State University after receiving a doctor of philosophy degree in plant pathology from North Carolina State University. For the next 40 years at Louisiana State University, Dr. Rush has provided the agricultural community with invaluable research on rice pathology that has greatly benefited farmers throughout the State of Louisiana and the Nation. Under his leadership, the LSU rice program experienced its greatest years of agricultural research expansion and development. Through his years of service as an educator and pathologist, Dr. Rush created enduring changes in a wide breadth of research and direction to impact and improve the lives of countless students, rice growers and consumers within and throughout his community.

Perhaps Dr. Rush's greatest accomplishment came in his development of a new rice variety, which he named after his beloved wife, Blanca Isabel. This new high-yielding, early harvest, long-grain rice variety was the culmination of decades of research focusing on the epidemiology and control of rice diseases, rice tissue transformation, and the breeding of disease-resistant rice strains. This new purple rice is bred in Louisiana and contains anti-inflammatory and anti-oxidant properties. His outstanding development of a more healthful and nutritious variety of rice will continue to provide unparalleled benefits to the citizens and communities of Louisiana and the Nation, delivering an improved alternative for generations to come.

Dr. Rush has been honored frequently during his distinguished career. Among these honors are the Florence Avalon Daggett Professorship in Rice Pathology, the LSU AgCenter's Distinguished Service Award, the Sedberry Award for outstanding graduate professorship, memberships to the American Phytopathological Society, the Rice Technical Working Group, the Germplasm Advisory Committee, and

two terms as president of the Louisiana Plant Protection Association Constitution Committee. Dr. Rush's career leaves a legacy of accomplishment and dedication to his family and all those who are a part of the agricultural communities that his tireless work impacted.

Dr. Rush has been and continues to be an inspiration to all those who have benefited from his decades of service to the field of rice pathology. It is with my heartfelt and greatest sincerity that I ask my colleagues to join me along with Dr. Rush's family in recognizing the life and many accomplishments of this incredible mentor, professor, and agricultural scientist, as well as his lasting impact throughout the Nation.

AIR FORCE 66TH BIRTHDAY

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, today—September 18—marks the Air Force's 66th birthday. For 66 years, our Nation has entrusted the Air Force with preserving peace and freedom, and defending our democracy. Since its beginnings on July 26, 1947, when President Harry Truman signed the National Security Act of 1947 on board the presidential aircraft, the Sacred Cow, and set the creation of the United States Air Force in motion, to its instrumental role in the wars of Iraq and Afghanistan, the Air Force has always served America admirably and I have every confidence that it will continue in this proud tradition.

The Air Force tracks its origins back to 1907, when the Wright Brothers conducted the world's first airplane flight over the sands of Kitty Hawk, NC. Just like the Wright Brothers whose innovation spurred aviation, the vast success and numerous achievements of the Air Force would not be possible without the talented Airmen who fuel innovation today, enabling the Air Force to fly faster, further, and utilize technology that the Wright Brothers could not have imagined over 100 years ago.

Today, the United States Air Force is the largest, most capable, and most technologically advanced air force in the world, with about 5,300 manned aircraft in service, 246 Unmanned Combat Air Vehicles, and 450 intercontinental ballistic missiles. The Air Force prides itself on five core missions; Air and Space Superiority; Intelligence, Surveillance and Reconnaissance; Rapid Global Mobility; Global Strike; and Command and Control. The Air Force's commitment to core missions illustrates its vast capability and has remained steadfast since the Air Force's establishment as a separate service 66 years ago. Our amazing Airmen today are constantly adapting and improving to meet the challenges of a fast-paced security environment and an ever-evolving battlespace across the globe.

The United States Air Force is, and will continue to be, the United States' key asymmetric advantage across the spectrum of conflict. Whether responding to a national security threat, a